

**TOWN OF SOUTH WINDSOR
INLAND WETLANDS/CONSERVATION COMMISSION**

Minutes

- 1 -

July 15, 2015

MEMBERS PRESENT: Elizabeth Warren, Barbara Kelly, John Blondin, Audrey Delnicki, Richard Muller, Carol Heffler, Arthur Jennings, Adam Reed

ALTERNATES PRESENT: Jack Phillips sitting for vacancy

STAFF PRESENT: Jeff Folger, Sr. Environmental Officer/Conservation Officer
Donna Thompson, Recording Secretary

THE FOLLOWING ARE MOTIONS MADE DURING THE REGULAR MEETING OF THE INLAND WETLANDS AGENCY/ CONSERVATION COMMISSION – MADDEN ROOM

Chairperson Warren called the meeting to order at 7:00 pm

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION: none

PERMIT EXTENSIONS: none

CORRESPONDENCE AND REPORTS: Chair Warren attended the Planning & Zoning Commission (PZC) meeting on July 14, 2015 and reported that the PZC unanimously endorsed support for the Deming Street Community Gardens as proposed by the Park and Recreation Department. PZC will send an 8-24 referral to the Town Council stating their support. An application will then have to be submitted to PZC by the Park and Recreation Commission for the community gardens project.

BONDS: none

MINUTES: 7/1/2015, approved by consensus

CONSERVATION COMMISSION: No scout projects at this time.

WETLAND OFFICER'S REPORT: In response to Commissioners' concerns about the conditions at the Avery Street reconstruction project, Mr. Folger stated that he will talk to the CT Water Co. about the stockpiles.

PUBLIC HEARING: 7:10

Commissioner Heffler read the legal notice for #15-35P as published in the Journal Inquirer.

Appl. #15-35P – Town of South Windsor, The Fairgrounds at Rye St Park – 75 Brookfield St - IWA/Conservation Commission application for construction of a multi-use field, parking, and internal access. The site is located westerly of Brookfield St, and northerly of Troy Rd. Rural Residential Zone.

Jeff Folger, Environmental Planner for the Town of South Windsor, presented the application. The project involves the clearing of approximately 16 acres of existing soft wood forest at the Barton Property, which is bordered on the east by Brookfield Street; on the south by Troy Road. There is Town-owned land bordering on the north, and residential properties bordering on the south and across Brookfield St to the west. The parcel consists of approximately 55 acres purchased as open space and maintained as such since 1998. Approximately six years ago the Town clear cut six acres to accommodate the relocation of Tiger Beetles from the I-291 corridor site, with the approval of DEEP. The clearing will be within the interior of the eastern portion of the site to accommodate: 1) a FEMA and state recommended debris storage area; 2) a recreational field; and 3) a home for the Wapping Fair. This multi-use site would be cleared, have minor grading, be seeded to grass and mowed, with an access road around the perimeter

**TOWN OF SOUTH WINDSOR
INLAND WETLANDS/CONSERVATION COMMISSION**

Minutes

- 2 -

July 15, 2015

of the site exiting onto Brookfield Street. The wetland area to the west of the proposed clearing site, north of the existing tobacco shed consists of a large gully going east to west and exiting in a culvert underneath the railroad tracks. There is an erosion control and sediment plan (very sandy soils, with a water table 2 to 4 feet deep) with perimeter controls and anti tracking pad off Brookfield Street at the existing opening to the site. The regulated activity consists of locating an emergency access road to Troy Road; to be used only by emergency vehicles, with a gate at Troy to prevent general public use. The stub for the access road comes within the 80 ft upland review area. This area is currently disturbed and open as it is the location of the old farm road from Brookfield to the tobacco shed. There is no additional clearing proposed within the Upland Review Area; the proposed access road will be farther out than the present farm road. Thus creating more of an area left to go wild. The disturbance would be approximately 3000 sq ft. The area would be fine graded, with a berm for the beetle clearing area to separate the multi use area from the Tiger Beetle preservation area, as well as erosion control and a divider for construction. Drainage tends to head east to west through the center of the site, which is very flat and very sandy with no overland flow. The berm will also act as a stormwater control as needed. This site is historically a white pine stand, but was not suitably maintained and is now perceived as dangerous due to the possibility of falling trees, and would only be useful for wildlife cover not for food. The access road around the perimeter would be gravel. The emergency access would have just an entrance pad at Troy Rd and remain compacted sand as it is. Stormwater would sheet off into the adjoining grassed area by pitching the road slightly into the center. For the Wapping Fair, the fair would be in the northern area with parking for 750 spaces in the grassed southern portion. Soil re-enforcement fiber could be used within the soil of the parking area, which would allow cars to park on it and still allow it to be an athletic field for most of the year. Soil testing will probably be done to confirm there is no pesticide residue from previous agricultural activities. The tobacco barn will remain at this time – it is currently leased to a tobacco farmer. A buffer of trees will remain; 100 feet from the rear property line on Troy Road and 50 feet along Brookfield Street.

Sandy Files, 151 Troy Road, voiced concern for the deer living on the property for the past several years and passed around photos of the herd. Ms. Files stated that it is a shame to take more of the wildlife habitat away in that area, especially since six acres have already been used to transplant the Tiger Beetles. Ms. Files listed the various species that live on the property in addition to the deer: owls, turkeys, foxes, coyotes, raccoons, opossums, rabbits. Ms. Files asked that the natural environment of the property be left as is. Chair Warren and Mr. Folger explained that the wildlife noted would use the area for cover/nesting and feed elsewhere, and that there would be some displacement with the removal of the trees. Though the trees left as a buffer around the edge of the property would still support smaller birds.

Saud Anwar, 93 Rockledge Drive, stated his support of the project, especially due to the safety hazard from the damaged trees. Dr. Anwar stated that careful assessment has been made of the condition of the trees. Dr. Anwar also stated that this area meets the needs of the disaster plan for the Town. Various sites had been carefully reviewed but this property is the best choice and will serve multiple purposes.

Terry Files, 151 Troy Road, would like a fence and some trees planted along the 1000 feet of the property line that abuts his land. Mr. Files will present his recommendation/request to the Planning and Zoning Commission on August 18th. Commissioner Phillips stated that a very strong edge of white pine saplings are growing in the northeast edge of the cleared area and that it is likely similar growth will occur around most of the cleared areas. Commissioner Phillips also stated that there is significant new growth on the berms for the Tiger Beetles.

Mr. Folger stated that this site is the most prudent and feasible choice since it can accommodate first and foremost the debris storage requirement and secondly be used for recreation and the Wapping Fair. The plan provides as much buffer between the site and the residential area as possible. The access drive takes into account the beetle habitat and is proposed to be as close to the existing farm road as possible and not encroach into the wetlands. With this plan there will be additional growth between the access road and the existing edge of the forest so that will actually increase the separating distance between the existing wetland and some expected use of the property. The slope, type of soil, position of wetlands,

**TOWN OF SOUTH WINDSOR
INLAND WETLANDS/CONSERVATION COMMISSION**

Minutes

- 3 -

July 15, 2015

number of acres needed/available, were all additional factors in choosing this site. The wetlands on this site would be considered a forested wetland confined to the lower portion of the gully, which gets deeper and farther away from the active portion of the site going westward.

Chair Warren and Commissioner Phillips stated they toured the site.

Motion to: close public hearing on Appl #15-35P at 7:45 pm

Was made by: Commissioner Phillips

Second by: Commissioner Kelly

The motion carried.

The vote was: 8 ayes (Warren, Kelly, Blondin, Delnicki, Muller, Jennings, Reed, Phillips); 1 nay (Heffler)

Commissioner Heffler read the legal notice for #15-36P as published in the Journal Inquirer.

Appl. #15-36P – International Samarkand Hotel Group – Staybridge Suites, 274 Buckland Road – IWA/Conservation Commission application for construction of hotel, parking, stormwater management system, and associated utilities. The site is located easterly of Buckland Road, Gateway Development Zone.

Jay Ussery and Tim Coon from JR Russo Associates represented the applicant. Mr. Ussery referred to Jeff Folger's memo to IWA/CC dated July 9, 2015 and John Ianni's, Soil Scientist, Wetland Report as having very good descriptions of the existing site conditions. The main entrance to the site will be located at the traffic light on Buckland Road opposite the rear entrance to Evergreen Walk. The site is historically agricultural in use with an extensive tile drainage system located thru out the property. The tile drains have depleted the hydrology and much of the functional value. All the water from the site flows into a drainage ditch located at the western end of the property. An existing culvert then directs the water into the pipe system located in Buckland Road. Additional changes to the proposal for the use of the site will be made to accommodate recommendations from town staff, in particular the Fire Marshal's stipulation of a driveway all around the building for emergency vehicle access. To address the impervious coverage concern associated with this driveway, Mr. Ussery stated that possibly grass pavers could be used. Mr. Ussery presented photographs of the site as it is currently, with some of the photos showing the invasives growing on the property. The project consists of a 100,000 sq ft "U" shaped hotel with 127 rooms; driveway in the front; parking on the south side, north side and along the front totaling 190 spaces; 3800 sq ft banquet facility located in the rear of the building. Utilities available to the site are sanitary sewer, gas, water. The sewer will be extended a short distance from down the street with the additional intent to accommodate the expansion of the Messiah Lutheran Church which neighbors this parcel. Shared driveway access will also be proposed for both the hotel property and the church property. Mr. Ussery reviewed John Ianni's report with the notation that Mr. Ianni would be available at the next meeting to answer any questions that the Commission might have.

Mr. Ussery stated the mitigation proposed is to dig a trench that would break up the tile drainage system so that it no longer functions and restore the hydrology to the site; then plant the area with berry producing shrubs that will provide cover as well as a food source. The shallow marsh area will be planted with marsh plantings, which are flowering wetland plants.

Mr. Coon addressed stormwater collection, detention and discharge; roof runoff, parking lot runoff, water quality treatment, a proposed 4 bay wet pond with aquatic bench and flock logs. Alternatives considered were additional parking, reduced mitigation area and instead of enhancement, creating more mitigation area, which would have to be off site.

Commissioners were concerned that the mitigation proposed for the loss of 82,000 sq ft of wetlands was not creating wetlands but only enhancing what was there. The enhancement would be considered a positive move for this area.

**TOWN OF SOUTH WINDSOR
INLAND WETLANDS/CONSERVATION COMMISSION**

Minutes

- 4 -

July 15, 2015

Jeff Folger stated that per the DEEP, mitigation doesn't mean specifically creation; enhancement is a form of mitigation; restoration is a form of mitigation; creation is a form of mitigation.

Chair Warren read into the record a letter from Paul and Victoria Margiott, 32 Sele Drive, in opposition to the project.

Brian Grimm from the Messiah Luthern Church which abuts this site spoke in support of the project.

Carolyn Mirek, 48 Sele Drive, opposed the project, but favored the mitigation proposed.

Saud Anwar, 93 Rockledge Drive, supports the project, stating it is a positive for the community and for this parcel and that there is a significant need for the hotel.

Due to the need for additional information, the consensus of the Commission was to hold open the public hearing on this application.

Motion to: continue the public hearing on Appl #15-36P to the next regularly scheduled meeting (9/2/15).

Was made by: Commissioner Phillips
Second by: Commissioner Muller
The motion carried and the vote was unanimous.

NEW BUSINESS:

Appl. #15-35P – Town of South Windsor, The Fairgrounds at Rye St Park – 75 Brookfield St - IWA/Conservation Commission application for construction of a multi-use field, parking and internal access. The site is located westerly of Brookfield St and northerly of Troy Rd. Rural Residential Zone.

Motion to: move a finding of no prudent and feasible alternatives, based on the evidence presented as a whole

Was made by: Commissioner Phillips
Seconded by: Commissioner Blondin
The motion: carried
Vote: unanimous

Motion to: approve Appl. #15-35P – Town of South Windsor, The Fairgrounds at Rye St Park – 75 Brookfield Street, with the following conditions:

1. The final approved copy of the entire set of plans and this letter reproduced thereon must be submitted to the Planning Department. This must be completed within 65 days of approval prior to any construction activity on the site. Plans submitted to Planning & Zoning Commission shall be considered having met this requirement.
2. The applicant shall indemnify and hold harmless the Town of South Windsor against any liability, which might result from the proposed operation or use.
3. The permit is valid for five years and shall expire on July 15, 2020. It is the landowner(s)/applicant(s) responsibility to track expiration dates and notify the Commission of a renewal request at least 65 days prior to expiration.
4. All approvals required must be obtained and submitted prior to any activity on the site.
5. A contact person shall be identified on the plans.

Was made by: Commissioner Phillips
Seconded by: Commissioner Jennings

**TOWN OF SOUTH WINDSOR
INLAND WETLANDS/CONSERVATION COMMISSION**

Minutes

- 5 -

July 15, 2015

The motion: carried
Vote: unanimous

OTHER BUSINESS:

Folger presented a minimal impact application from a representative of Hartford Audubon. The gentleman is a soil scientist and environmental engineer, who volunteers for the Audubon. The application is to repair Newberry Road where it abuts the Audubon's property, which is station 43 in the meadows. The road is old and essentially acts as a dam across the flood plain there. The proposal is to put in 4 plastic culverts. The road will no longer act like a dam, but the water would overflow thru the system. This will be an improvement to current conditions by restoring the hydrology. The entire disturbance will be in the road except for the removal of a sediment delta that had washed off the road. This sediment material will be reapplied to the road. This type of application could be handled at the staff level, either as a minimal impact; a use as of right due to repairs to an existing farm road; or with a cease and restore order due to the sediment being washed from the road into the wetlands.

Motion to: issue a cease and restore order for the erosion and the breaches on Newberry Road, Station 43 area

Was made by: Commissioner Phillips
Second by: Commissioner Delnicki
The motion carried.

The vote was unanimous, with Chair Warren abstaining due to her affiliation with Hartford Audubon.

APPLICATIONS RECEIVED:

Appl. #15-38W – Group Home - 30 West Road - IWA/Conservation Commission application for the construction of a group home, parking, stormwater structures and associated utilities. The site is located easterly of West Road and northerly of Strong Road. Rural Residential (RR) Zone.

ADJOURNMENT:

Motion to: adjourn at 9:48 pm
Was made by: Commissioner Heffler
Second by: Commissioner Delnicki
The motion carried and the vote was unanimous.

Respectfully submitted,

Donna Thompson
Recording Secretary

Approved: September 2, 2015